AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-50. (Cancelled)

51. (Previously Presented) A nerve retractor assembly for manipulation of a spinal neurostructure, the assembly comprising, a retractor blade and a retractor body provided with first and second enlarged edges extending in an axial direction and defining a channel therebetween adapted to engagingly receive the retractor blade, the retractor blade received within the channel and nested between and engaged with the first and second enlarged edges to maintain the retractor blade in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body, the channel being open in lateral direction between the first and second enlarged edges and the retractor blade including a concave shape extending continuously from the first enlarged edge to the second enlarged edge and open in a lateral direction to provide an unobstructed view of a retracted area of a surgical site, and wherein the retractor body further includes at least one supporting member mounted thereon for attaching a retractor pin, and a retractor pin attached to a first one of the at least one supporting member for fixedly positioning the retractor blade relative to the neurostructure.

52. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the at least one supporting member defines a hollow tube for receiving the retractor pin.

53. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the channel is a concave channel.

54. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the retractor pin has a handle and a shaft disposed between the pin and the handle and slideably received in the at least one supporting member.

55. (Previously Presented) A nerve retractor assembly for manipulation of a spinal neurostructure, the assembly comprising, a retractor blade and a retractor body provided with

first and second enlarged edges extending in an axial direction and defining a channel therebetween adapted to engagingly receive the retractor blade, the retractor blade received within the channel and nested between and engaged with the first and second enlarged edges to maintain the retractor blade in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body, the channel being open in lateral direction between the first and second enlarged edges and the retractor blade including a concave shape extending continuously from the first enlarged edge to the second enlarged edge and open in a lateral direction to provide an unobstructed view of a retracted area of a surgical site, and

wherein the retractor body includes a first supporting member and a second supporting member, the first and second supporting members extending in an axial direction and positioned on opposite sides of the channel, each of the first supporting member and the second supporting member mounted to the retractor body and adapted for attaching a first and a second retractor pin, respectively; and

the first retractor pin being attached to the first supporting member and the second retractor pin received for movement within the second supporting member.

56.-62. (Cancelled)

63. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the retractor blade is received in the channel for slidable movement towards a distal end of the channel.

64. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 63 wherein at least a portion of the retractor blade and at least a portion of the channel are in slidable contact during said slidable movement of the retractor blade toward the distal end.

65. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the retractor blade has a shape complementary to a shape of the retractor body.

66. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 55 wherein the channel is configured to slidably receive the retractor blade for slidable movement towards a distal end of the channel.

67. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 66 wherein the first and second supporting members define the first and second enlarged edges of the retractor body engaged with the retractor blade.

68. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 55 wherein the first and second supporting members define the first and second enlarged edges of the retractor body engaged with the retractor blade.

69. (Cancelled)

70. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the retractor blade is fixedly engaged with the first and second enlarged edges of the retractor body to maintain the retractor blade in the predetermined position relative to the retractor body.

71. (Cancelled)

72. (Cancelled)

73. (Previously Presented) A retractor assembly, comprising:

a retractor body having a support portion including first and second support members defining a channel therebetween and each support member having an enlarged edge extending in an axial direction along the channel;

a first pin receivable within a first opening in the first support member and a second pin receivable within a second opening in the second support member;

a retractor blade received within the channel and nested between and engaged with each of the enlarged edges such that the retractor blade is held in a predetermined position relative to

the retractor body by the enlarged edges of the first and second support members; and

the retractor blade having a shape complementary to a shape of the support portion and the channel being open in lateral direction between the enlarged edges and the retractor blade including a concave shape extending continuously from a first of the enlarged edges to a second of the enlarged edges and open in a lateral direction to provide an unobstructed view of a retracted area of a surgical site.

74. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 73 wherein the second pin includes a handle and a shaft extending therefrom, the shaft comprising the second pin received in the second opening in the second support member.

75. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 74 wherein a distal end portion of the second pin is forcibly inserted into a tissue for maintaining a position of the retractor assembly relative to the surgical site.

76. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 73 wherein the channel is configured to slidably receive the retractor blade.

77. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 76 wherein at least a portion of the retractor blade and at least a portion of the support portion of the retractor body are in slidable contact during sliding movement of the retractor blade within the channel.

78. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 76 wherein the retractor blade includes a stop to limit sliding movement of the retractor blade within the channel.

79. (Cancelled)

80. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 73 wherein the first and second support members defining the first and second openings that receive the first and second pins also define the first and second enlarged edges of the retractor body.

81. (Cancelled)

82. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 51 wherein the retractor pin includes external threads that are threadingly engaged with internal threads defined by the at least one supporting member

83. (Previously Presented) The retractor assembly of claim 73 wherein one of the first and second pins includes external threads that are threadingly engaged with internal threads defined by a corresponding one of the first and second support members.

84. (Currently Amended) ~~The retractor assembly of claim 79~~ A retractor assembly, comprising:

a retractor body having a support portion including first and second support members defining a channel therebetween and each support member having an enlarged edge extending in an axial direction along the channel;

a retractor blade received within the channel and nested between and engaged with each of the enlarged edges such that the retractor blade is held in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body by the enlarged edges of the first and second support members; and

the retractor blade having a shape complementary to a shape of the support portion and the channel being open in lateral direction between the enlarged edges and the retractor blade including a concave shape extending continuously from a first of the enlarged edges to a second of the enlarged edges and open in a lateral direction to provide an unobstructed view of a retracted area of a surgical site; and

wherein the retractor blade includes a distractor tip sized and shaped for insertion into an intervertebral space for distraction of the intervertebral space, the distractor tip having a width corresponding to a distracted height of the intervertebral space and a rounded distal end transitioning to the width of the distractor tip to facilitate the insertion into and the distraction of the intervertebral space, wherein the rounded distal end of the distractor tip defines a convex curvature transitioning to the width of the distractor tip.

85. (Currently Amended) ~~The nerve retractor assembly of claim 81~~ A nerve retractor assembly for manipulation of a spinal neurostructure, the assembly comprising, a retractor blade and a retractor body provided with first and second enlarged edges extending in an axial direction and defining a channel therebetween adapted to engagingly receive the retractor blade, the retractor blade received within the channel and nested between and engaged with the first and second enlarged edges to maintain the retractor blade in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body, the channel being open in lateral direction between the first and second enlarged edges and the retractor blade including a concave shape extending continuously from the first enlarged edge to the second enlarged edge and open in a lateral direction to provide an unobstructed view of a retracted area of a surgical site, wherein the retractor blade includes a distractor tip sized and shaped for insertion into an intervertebral space for distraction of the intervertebral space, the distractor tip having a width corresponding to a distracted height of the intervertebral space and a rounded distal end transitioning to the width of the distractor tip to facilitate insertion into and the distraction of the intervertebral space, wherein the rounded distal end of the distractor tip defines a convex curvature transitioning to the width of the distractor tip.